

ADMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1.-16. (Cancelled)

17. (Currently Amended) An electrolytic reduction cell for the production of aluminum comprising at least one inert anode attached to a castable refractory support where the anodes and support are in contact with a molten salt bath in an electrolysis apparatus, where the support comprises a 50% to 95% dense castable refractory subject to thermal shock and attack by gases from the bath including HF and O₂ gases, where the refractory comprises refractory material and from ~~2 wt.% to 20 wt.%~~ 3 wt.% to 10 wt. % of metal fibers, where the metal fibers have cross over points, are from 1 cm to 4 cm long and have a length to thickness ratio of 500:1 to 20:1, and where no more than 20 fibers per sq. cm on average protrude through the outer side of the support, minimizing contact with both gases and fiber degradation to filter cross over points, where the fibers help stop crack propagation caused by thermal shock.

18. (Original) The cell of Claim 17, wherein the support comprises at least 55% of alumina castable refractory.

19. (Original) The cell of Claim 17, wherein, in the support, the metal fibers are selected from the group consisting of stainless steel, nickel alloy, copper alloy and mixtures thereof.

20. (Original) The cell of Claim 17, wherein, in the support, the metal fibers are stainless steel and the metal fibers have a coating comprising an oxide of phosphorus.

21. (Currently Amended) The cell of Claim 17, wherein, in the support, the metal fibers have a concave cross-section, ~~and are present in a range from 3 wt.% to 10 wt.%~~ and where no more than than 10 fibers per sq. cm. on average protrude through the outer side of the support.

22. (Currently Amended) The cell of Claim 17, wherein the electrolysis apparatus is an aluminum producing apparatus, the molten metal salt bath is molten cryolite at about 850°C to 1050°C, ~~and the gases include HF and O₂.~~

23. (Previously Amended) An electrolytic process for making a metal where an electrolyte reduction cell comprising at least one inert anode is attached to a castable refractory support where the anodes and support contact a molten salt bath in an electrolysis apparatus at up to about 1000°C and where corrosive gases contact the inert anode and the support, and where metal is deposited from the molten salt bath, where said support comprises a 50% to 95% dense castable refractory subject to thermal shock and attack by gases from the bath, where the refractory comprises refractory material and from 3 wt.% to 10 wt.% of metal fibers, where the metal fibers have cross over points, are from 1 cm to 4 cm long and have a length to thickness ratio of 500:1 to 20:1, and where no more than 20 fibers per sq. cm. on average protrude through the outer side of the support, minimizing contact with both gases and fiber degradation to fiber cross over points, where the fibers help stop crack propagation caused by thermal shock.